

OFFICE OF SAFETY MANAGEMENT

Devens Reserve Forces Training Area

SAFETY BULLETIN

Christmas Tree Safety Tips

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The holidays are a joyful time of the year when we gather with our families and friends to celebrate, however at this time of the year, our lives can become hectic and it becomes easy to forget simple safety precautions. So, to insure that your holiday stays merry and bright, keep these safety tips in mind:

If your traditions include putting up a real Christmas tree, look for one that has a deep green color and a strong scent of pine. You should be able to bend the needles without them breaking and a minimum number of needles should fall when shaking the tree. The trunk should be sticky with sap. When you get your tree home, on a diagonal, cut off about 2" from the trunk and immediately mount the tree in a sturdy, water holding stand; keep the stand filled with water. Place the tree in a location away from heat sources such as radiators and fireplaces and don't place the tree in an area that blocks a doorway or exit. If you choose to go the artificial tree route, remember that it could be combustible. Choose one that is labeled fire resistant and if it has a built in electrical system, it should carry the UL marker.

If you plan on decorating the tree with lights, insure that the light set and electrical cords also carry the UL marker. Before you string the lights, inspect them for fraying, bare wires, loose connections or broken sockets. If you find them in disrepair, discard them and replace with new. Make sure that you only use inside lights on your tree. Try to position the bulbs so that they are not in direct contact with tree needles. Also keep them away from curtains and other flammable material. Never use lit candles on or near the tree. Always remember to unplug all decorations before leaving the house or going to bed.

When the holidays have ended, take your tree down as soon as you can. The longer the tree stays up, the more of a fire hazard it becomes. A good idea to recycle your tree is to put it up in the backyard as a feeding station for hungry birds. Chunks of suet, bread crust spread with peanut butter or any stale pastry make welcome snacks for your flying visitors.

Following these simple safety tips can help keep your Christmas merry. Happy Holidays.



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